

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
INFO USMISSION IAEA VIENNA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

CONFIDENTIAL STATE 194628

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: IAEA, TECH, PK, CA
SUBJECT: PAKISTANI REQUEST FOR HEAVY WATER

1. DEPARTMENT AUGUST 13 DISCUSSED WITH CANADIAN COUNSELOR SINCLAIR NUTTING PAKISTANI REQUEST FOR HEAVY WATER. NUTTING UNDERTOOK TO REPORT CONVERSATION TO OTTAWA, BUT LEFT ON TWO-WEEK LEAVE BEFORE REPLY RECEIVED. IF NECESSARY EMBASSY OTTAWA IS REQUESTED TO REITERATE TALKING POINTS BELOW WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS:

--THE PAKISTAN AEC HAS ASKED THE USG TO AGREE TO THE TRANSFER TO PAKISTAN OF 5,000 KG OF U.S.-PRODUCED HEAVY WATER NOW OWNED BY THE FRG. WE HAVE DELAYED ACTION ON THIS REQUEST BECAUSE OF CONCERN REGARDING THE ADEQUACY OF THE EXISTING SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENTS WHICH INVOLVE CANADA AND UNDER WHICH PREVIOUS SUCH SHIPMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE.

--WE HAVE ALSO BEEN AWARE OF THE DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE GOC AND PAKISTAN OVER YOUR PROPOSALS TO TIGHTEN CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESENT SAFEGUARDS PROVISIONS IN YOUR BILATERAL NUCLEAR COOPERATION AGREEMENT AND THE RELATED TRILATERAL SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT WITH PAKISTAN. WE RECENTLY BROACHED WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT IN OTTAWA THE POSSIBILITY OF WITHHOLDING OUR

APPROVAL FOR THE TRANSFER OF HEAVY WATER IN ORDER TO BRING ADDITIONAL PRESSURE TO BEAR ON PAKISTAN TO TAKE A MORE FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS. YOUR MINISTRY

OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SUGGESTED INFORMALLY THAT A DELAY OF 60 TO 90 DAYS COULD BE HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD.

--WE HAVE ALSO QUESTIONED WHETHER THE PAEC HAS A LEGITIMATE NEED FOR THIS QUANTITY OF HEAVY WATER. AS YOU ARE AWARE, THE PAEC RECENTLY EXPERIENCED A SUBSTANTIAL LOSS OF HEAVY WATER DURING A MISHAP IN OPERATION OF THE KANUPP REACTOR AND REQUESTED FROM THE GOC 5,000 KG OF HEAVY WATER ON AN EMERGENCY BASIS TO REPLACE THAT WHICH WAS LOST. HALF OF THIS AMOUNT HAS ALREADY BEEN AIR SHIPPED.

--WE HAVE NOW MADE A TECHNICAL JUDGMENT THAT BOTH OF THESE OUTSTANDING REQUESTS SEEM REASONABLE IN TERMS OF THE ESTIMATED ACCIDENTAL LOSS AND NORMAL INVENTORY REQUIREMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH KANUPP'S ROUTINE OPERATING LOSSES. THE PAEC REQUEST TO US PREDATED THE ACCIDENTAL LOSS AND WAS DESIGNED TO REBUILD A PLANNED INVENTORY OF 5 TO 7 TONS WHICH HAS BEEN LARGEY DEPLETED.

--WE ARE CONCERNED THAT FURTHER DELAYING THIS SHIPMENT COULD BE INSTRUMENTAL IN FORCING KANUPP TO SHUT DOWN AGAIN SHOULD EVEN A RELATIVELY SMALL ADDITIONAL UNUSUAL LOSS OF HEAVY WATER OCCUR.

--SHOULD WE DECIDE TO AUTHORIZE THIS TRANSFER, WE FEEL IT COULD BEST BE TIED TO AN EXISTING PAKISTAN-IAEA PROJECT AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH SOME BOOSTER RODS CONTAINING HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM OF U.S. ORIGIN HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED TO PAKISTAN THROUGH THE IAEA. THIS COULD BE DONE BY AN AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD REQUIRE APPROVAL OF THE IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS, THE NEXT MEETING OF WHICH IS IN MID-SEPTEMBER.

--THERE APPEAR TO BE CERTAIN ADVANTAGES TO PROCEEDING IN CONFIDENTIAL

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SUCH A MANNER. THE EXISTING PROJECT AGREEMENT HAS NO SET DURATION SO THAT ANY MATERIALS TRANSFERRED THEREUNDER ARE SAFEGUARDED UNTIL THEY ARE REMOVED FROM THE SAFEGUARDS INVENTORY LIST. IN ADDITION, AMENDMENT OF THE PRESENT AGREEMENT PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLICITLY REQUIRE-- RATHER THAN RELYING ON INTERPRETIVE S

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